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## EDITORIAL

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Everything is now related to the world-war. How shall English teachers do their bit in making the world safe for democracy and democracy safe for the world? Not by the wringing of hands on account of the dreadful calamity, certainly, nor by indulging hate. The times call for intelligence, determination, action.

### Capitalizing the War

Two welcome tendencies are manifest. As the current articles in the *English Journal* show, both literature and composition are taking on new significance with the growing seriousness of the national consciousness. More and more, books and periodicals are read for their content, for their human interest, for the light they throw on what men should live for, and less for a specialized knowledge of historical facts or growth in the capacity to evaluate writing in terms of technique. In short, literature is being more generally treated as the expression of experience and as enabling the control of experience.

Composition, meanwhile, serves more frequently as genuine communication of ideas. Obedience to conventions, no less necessary than before, is crowded into its proper subordinate place as the accessory of clearness and force in persuading one's hearers to buy Liberty Bonds or save for Thrift Stamps. When the four-minute men from a public-speaking class succeed in inducing their mates in the various grades of a city school to offer within a fortnight more than five thousand books for our soldiers through the power of the spoken word, a lesson in the value of oral composition is taught so impressively that the most slavish devotee of red ink must perforce learn it.

These tendencies may become permanent. They will surely do so if the significance of them is made clear to all English teachers. Principals, heads of departments, and other leaders have here a priceless opportunity—to capitalize the beneficent influences of the great and unwelcome struggle in which our nation is engaged.